

I Will Build My Church – Part 5

Matthew 16:18-19 (KJV) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

- This series is about discovering God's blueprint for building His church!

PRINCIPLE #8: TEAM MINISTRY

(Acts 6:1-4)

Acts 6:1-4 (KJV) ¹And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. ²Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. ³Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. ⁴But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

- “murmur” – “to mutter, or grumble, in a low undertone”
- There were seven murmurings recorded against Israel:
 1. Concerning the way (Numbers 11:1-3)
 2. Concerning the food (Numbers 11:4-17)
 3. Concerning the giants (Numbers 13:32-14:2, 27-36)
 4. Concerning their leaders (Numbers 16:1-11, 41)
 5. Concerning the Divine judgments (Numbers 16:41, 17:5-10)
 6. Concerning the desert (Numbers 20:1-5)
 7. Concerning the manna – again! (Numbers 21:4-5)
- Paul says to the saints, “Neither murmur ye!” (1 Corinthians 10:10) and “Do all things without murmuring!” (Philippians 2:14)
- THE PROBLEM WAS THAT THERE WAS TOO MUCH WORK FOR THE PASTORS TO DO ALONE!
- God’s solution was to appoint **DEACONS** (“diakonas” = “a servant, one called to serve, to wait on, or an attendant”)
- These men were to be of honest report (having a good testimony inside and outside the church), to be full of the Holy Ghost (having a real relationship with God), and to be full of wisdom (having the necessary skills for the job)

- The word “deacon” does not refer to an official church board position, but to a ministry role in the church.

Ephesians 4:11-13 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

- “for” = “so that”
- This is not a three-fold job description of the five-fold ministry, but rather God’s plan for **TEAM MINISTRY!**

1 Corinthians 12:27-30 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

- Paul’s style is to use rhetorical questions that imply negative answers:
 - **Romans 3:3** For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?
 - **Romans 6:1** What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

Implication 1: not all are apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, etc. NOTE EXCEPTIONS!

Implication 2: since HELPS and GOVERNMENTS are excepted, it follows that anyone can have them

During the Dark Ages, a distinction was made between clergy and laity, a trick of Satan to reduce and confine ministry. This was first taught by **Nicolas**, who was one of the original deacons in Act 6:5! He was not content with having a ministry, but wanted to have a role of “pastoral authority.” But his teaching that exalted “pastors” above measure actually reduced the overall effectiveness of the church drastically.

- **Revelation 2:15** So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. (PERGAMOS)

IN REALITY, EVERY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH HAS A MINISTRY! The saints are the **MINISTERS** and the pastors are the **ADMINISTRATORS**.

- **1 Corinthians 12:11** But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.
- Every member has gifts; every member has at least one talent (Matthew 25:14-30)
- Depending on their God-given ability, every member can exercise either the gift of **HELPS** or **GOVERNMENTS** in some way

WHAT IS THE GIFT OF HELPS? (A CRUTCH)

- “antilepsis” - to participate or support (not an official capacity or title!)
- not necessarily “supernatural” gifts, but rather “natural” gifts sanctified by the power of God in the life of an individual
- God uses “natural” to be a blessing, thus bringing “supernatural” benefit (loaves & fishes, pot of oil)
- some “gifts of God” can be the development of a natural capacity (playing the piano!)
- yet, these “helps” were thought worthy to be mentioned with apostles, prophets, teachers, etc.
- some are so busy looking for a “spiritual” job, that they miss God’s plan for them!
- helps today in the church: tape ministry, music ministry, children’s ministry, etc.

WHAT IS THE GIFT OF GOVERNMENTS? (A PADDLE)

- “kubernesis” - to steer or direct
- Paul was familiar with the sea and ships (shipwrecked three times, said that Hymenaeus and Alexander had made shipwreck concerning the faith, used many analogies like this one)
- this term applied to ships of the day, which were “steered” by many but under the leadership of one
- galley ship (joke: today captain throws party for slaves, tomorrow he wants to go water-skiing)
- this word CAN refer to deacons, elders, etc. who help steer the church, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY
- we ALL can “steer” the church by UNITY in our prayer and work; it takes more than one man!
- we need to “steer” the church around problems and into revival; every member can help (ie: canoe)
- humorous example: meddler who promoted unity (“he said you were kind to your family & honest!”)

WHAT ARE THE BEST GIFTS?

- **1 Corinthians 12:31** But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.
- The best gifts are those which enable an assembly to be edified at a particular time. (G. Shalm)
- Our church would definitely benefit from HELPS and GOVERNMENTS!

HOWEVER, MANY PEOPLE WANT THEIR GIFTS TO BE THE ONES THAT GET NOTICED!

- There is many times an artificial division between those who “help” (work) and those who “govern” (direct spiritually) - this hurts the church and is a frustration to the ministry!
- Many people secretly feel that everyone else should think, feel, act and become involved in church ministries EXACTLY LIKE THEY DO.

A PARABLE: THE ANIMAL SCHOOL

A group of animals decided to improve their general welfare by starting a new school, in which the curriculum consisted of running, climbing, flying and swimming. All of the animals took all of the subjects.

The duck was good at swimming and fair in flying, but he was terrible in running. So he was made to drop the swimming class and stay after school to practice running. He kept this up until he was only average at swimming, but average was acceptable. The others, including the teacher, were no longer threatened by the duck’s swimming abilities, so everyone felt more comfortable – except the duck.

The eagle was considered to be a problem student. For instance, in climbing class he could beat all of the others to the top of the tree, but he insisted on using his own method of getting there. He had to be severely disciplined and finally, because of his non-cooperation in swimming, he was expelled for insubordination.

The rabbit started at the top of the class in running, but was woefully inadequate in other areas. Because of so much make-up work in swimming, he had a nervous breakdown and had to drop out of school.

The turtle was a failure in almost every course offered. His shell was considered to be the leading cause of his failure, so it was removed. This did help his running a bit, but sadly, he became the first casualty of the new curriculum when he was stepped on by the horse.

- The fault with this kind of divisive thinking lies with both parties: the “spiritual” who are waiting for their chance in the spotlight and won’t work, and the “workers” who back off of the spiritual areas just because of a few extremists!
- **1 Corinthians 12:22-23** Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.
- **Phillips Trans:** “The parts which do not look beautiful have a deeper beauty in the work they do.”
- **Aesop’s Fable:** Stag worshipped antlers and despised legs; caught by antlers and couldn’t run.
- How important is your hand? (noticeable) How important is your heart? (much more crucial)
- SOME FRUIT CAN ONLY BE BROUGHT FORTH IN THE SHADE. (Everyone is important!)
- **MARY & MARTHA:** Martha, the worker, got distracted from Jesus when the cares of the physical realm got too heavy. But Mary, the worshipper, got distracted from Jesus when the cares of the spiritual realm got too heavy. (at the death of Lazarus, Martha went to meet Jesus, then had to return to the house to get Mary)
- **The bigger the team, the more impact it can have!**
- **PARETO PRINCIPLE:** 20% of your time yields 80% of results, 20% of your people do 80% of the work, 20% of people eat 80% of the food!

HERMAN MELVILLE, IN “MOBY DICK” ...

- joke: Jaws, the ultimate church gossip movie
- “To insure the greatest efficiency in the dart, the harpooners of this world must start to their feet out of idleness, and not out of toil.”
- Pastors are “harpooners” of sin, and responsible for throwing out the net of evangelism
- **Acts 6:4** But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.
- **1 Corinthians 16:15** I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,)